

Sunset & Westview High Schools Win Largest-Ever Pacific Northwest Japan Bowl



March 24, 2025 – PORTLAND, OR

One hundred high school students from across Oregon and Southwest Washington gathered at Clark College in Vancouver, WA, on Saturday, March 15th, for the eighth annual Pacific Northwest Japan Bowl, a regional Japanese language and culture quiz competition owned and operated by the Japan-America Society of Oregon. This year marks a record number in both participants and community partners, making this the largest Pacific Northwest Japan Bowl held since its creation in 2017.

Students Tomola Bolonduro, Aaron Guo, and Riley Mitlehner of Sunset High School (OR) triumphed over close competition from Bothell High School (WA) and International School of Beaverton (OR) in the senior division Level Four finals, winning a trip to represent our region in the National Japan Bowl championships in Washington, D.C. on April 4-5.

Thirty-six teams from twelve schools in Oregon and Washington competed for top prizes in three different levels over the day. Westview High School (OR) students Sophia Lee, Yunseul Oh, and Rachel Yoon were the Level Three champions, beating teams from Woodinville High School (WA) and Bothell High School (WA) and winning the other spot in the National Championships in Washington, D.C. Evan Lopez, Ember Maricle, and

Oliver Munsell of Churchill High School (OR) won the Level Two competition, with International School of Beaverton (OR) and Woodinville High School (WA) taking second and third place.

Along with the competition, students enjoyed bento and a cultural performance by Takohachi, a Japanese music group. After lunch, students had time to network with local college-level Japanese students and learn more about college and university Japanese language programs.

"I made a lot of connections, met a lot of new people, and learned a lot more than I thought I would," said a Level Two competitor.

Over 65 partners, from local businesses and universities to cultural and educational organizations, came together to encourage students to learn and connect with Japanese culture, making this program possible with financial and in-kind support. From technology companies like SEH America, Hitachi High-Tech, and Ohtomo Chemical, to Temple University and WaniKani in the education sector, and even those in finance and food like Perkins and Uwajimaya - Japan Bowl brings together all kinds of groups to support the next generation.

Joining these local businesses were 25 educational institutions, including 12 competing high schools, 10 colleges with booths showcasing their language programs, two statewide teacher associations, and student volunteers from other college and high school programs, including some visiting from Japan. On the day of the program, over 50 volunteers worked together to make the day a success.

"We've spent so much time learning about Japanese language and culture in class. This is a great way to express our learning and show our hard work," reflected a Level Three student.

The Pacific Northwest Japan Bowl is owned and operated by the Japan-America Society of Oregon, a non-profit dedicated to supporting business and developing community between Japan, Oregon, and Southwest Washington. Details about their programs are available at <https://jaso.org/>.

Additional photos from this competition are available at <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?vanity=JASO202&set=a.1057998266358766>

Full Results

Level 2

1st Churchill High School (OR)

2nd International School of Beaverton (OR)

3rd Woodinville High School (WA)

Level 3

1st Westview High School (OR)

2nd Woodinville High School (WA)

3rd Bothell High School (WA)

Level 4

1st Sunset High School (OR)

2nd Bothell High School (WA)

3rd International School of Beaverton (OR)